



The role of the Grief Coach is to offer compassionate and empathetic support to individuals mourning the loss of their pet. The primary goal is to create a safe space where the client can express their emotions freely and find support in this painful ordeal.

The stance of the Grief Coach is characterized by active listening, without judgement, and with unconditional acceptance of the person's experience. It involves being fully present, attentive to the needs expressed or not by the client. The coach refrains from giving advice or trying to "fix" the situation, but rather helps the person to navigate at their own pace through their grieving process.

This attitude requires a great capacity for empathy, that is, the ability to put themselves in the other's shoes to understand how they feel, while maintaining a "healthy" emotional distance. The Grief Coach must be able to welcome and contain intense emotions such as sadness, anger, or guilt, without being overwhelmed themselves.

Another essential aspect of the posture is non-judgment. In a society where pet bereavement is still poorly recognized, many feel misunderstood, or even judged in their grief. The coach must show great open-mindedness and respect for the uniqueness of each human-animal relationship and the experience of loss.

Congruence is also an indispensable quality of the Grief Coach. This means being authentic and consistent between what one thinks, what one feels, and what one expresses. This authenticity creates a climate of trust conducive to the release of speech and emotions.

Beyond the dual relationship, the role of the Grief Coach is also to inform and guide bereaved people. For example, they can explain the grieving process, the normal reactions

associated with it, and absolve the person of certain thoughts or emotions. They can also guide them towards other resources such as support groups or relevant reading material.

Finally, the Grief Coach must be clear about their own limitations and those of their intervention. Their role is not to replace a psychologist or therapist, but rather to offer specific support around pet bereavement. They must be able to identify situations that require more holistic support and, if necessary, refer to competent professionals.

Example: In a first session, Lucie expresses her guilt at having to euthanize her cat Régisse following a long illness. She feels as though she's betrayed her companion and wonders if she made the right decision. The Grief Coach welcomes her emotion with empathy and reassures her that her doubts are legitimate and common in such situations. He helps her explore the reasons that led her to make this difficult decision and reconnect with her deep intention to alleviate Régisse's suffering. Gradually, Lucie manages to calm her guilt and reconcile with her choice, guided by the kindness and non-judgment of her companion.

Key Takeaways:

- The Grief Coach offers compassionate and empathetic support to individuals mourning the loss of their pets.
- Their stance is characterized by active listening, without judgement, and with unconditional acceptance of the person's experience.
- The coach shows a great capacity for empathy while maintaining a "healthy" emotional distance.
- Non-judgment and respect for the uniqueness of each human-animal relationship are essential.
- Congruence (consistency between thoughts, feelings, and expression) establishes a climate of trust.
- The Grief Coach provides information on the grieving process and guides towards suitable resources.
- They know the limits of their intervention and refer to other professionals if necessary.
- Their role is to provide a safe space for expressing emotions and navigate through grief, rather than seeking to "fix".